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# **The personalization of politics:**

social media strategies in the 2021 Madrid elections

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# 1. Initial considerations

## 1.1 Introduction

The current political communication landscape is one that cannot be fully understood without taking into account social media platforms. Indeed, political parties have incorporated these media into their broader political communication strategies. Scholars identify Obama's 2008 presidential campaign as a paradigm-changing event that officially marked the beginning of social media as a strategic medium for political communication (Costa, 2009; Effing et al, 2011; Kalsnes, 2016). A strategy that has since been replicated and developed by other political parties, given that an increasing part of their electorate is spending time in social media. Since then, the media landscape has continued to change, with new platforms and new trends of usage – a change that also makes social media usage by political parties more difficult (Effing et al, 2011). Still, the prospect of social media platforms remains a strategic choice to political parties, not only because they are able to engage with their electorate through new media platforms, but rather because these very same platforms are seen as mediums which can foster citizens' participation in the political debate (Effing et al, 2011), even democratizing it.

Social media are also attractive mediums to political parties because they give these actors the opportunity to get their message across to the public without depending as much on traditional media (Kalsnes, 2016). This is because by publishing it themselves, they have more control of the message (and the framing) they wish to send, and are consequently more capable of reaching their target audience. As a whole, the usage undertaken by political parties of online platforms reflects their understanding that these media can strategically improve political parties' chances at upcoming elections (ibid). Nonetheless, it is important to note that these new media are not used in isolation, nor do they substitute traditional media. Precisely, scholars like Lilleker, Tenscher and Štětka (2015) have coined the term 'hypermedia campaigning' to explain how political parties are using strategically both traditional and new media platforms for electoral campaigns. This means then that social media are complementary, and thus not exclusionary, to traditional media.

Hence, as applied to electoral contexts, political parties structure their campaigns along these complementary lines, for they use both traditional and digital media to attract

new voters and maintain existing ones (Klinger et al, 2017). In this electoral context, political parties have as their ultimate goal to be perceived as the legitimate option by voters, so as to win their vote (ibid). To do so, they use digital and traditional media to present their intentions, their objectives and their ideas to the electorate in the hopes of persuading them to vote for their party (ibid).

In this sense, the current political landscape, and in particular, the political communication landscape, is one that bridges the old with the new. Traditional political communication, through mediums like press or television, is bridged with social media platforms, giving birth to a new political communication. Consequently, this phenomenon opens the door for other features present in traditional political communication to be present too in the new online landscape. Within this array of features, it is to this study's interest to analyse the phenomenon of the personalization of politics. It is a phenomenon argued to have been borne out of the emergence of traditional media, like television (Rebolledo, 2017), but nowadays extended to social media platforms and elections (Kalsnes, 2016). This shift from the party to the candidate, as explained by the theory of personalization, is even argued to be the “central feature of democratic politics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century” (McAllister, 2007, p.585).

It is this assertion that the present investigation seeks to verify, being the presence and significance of personalization in social media campaigns by political parties. To do so, it will take the case study of the 2021 elections in the autonomous community of Madrid. It was the 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2021 that the President of the autonomous community of Madrid, Isabel Díaz Ayuso, called for early elections to be held the 4<sup>th</sup> of May. This decision took place in a context of significant political instability in the autonomous community. Fearful that her coalition partner Ciudadanos would not stand with the Popular Party (PP), and would even support the no-confidence votes presented by the opposition - the socialist party (PSOE) and Más Madrid - Ayuso decided that the best strategy to avoid further turmoil and instability to her government was that of early elections (Caballero, 2021).

It is to the author's interest to choose the case of the local elections of Madrid for it was during these that a personal growing interest in the topic of political communication first sparked. As one of the many voters who participated in the elections, it became necessary to make a ‘deep dive’ into parties' communications in order to gage which one

to vote. Precisely, it was in this exercise that the initial curiosity about online political communication was further confirmed. Particularly, in noticing differences and similarities in the messages issued via social media by political parties in their campaign efforts. Once the electoral period concluded, this curiosity continued, and the author kept in touch with social media accounts of some political parties post-elections. There was this inkling interest that social media was a tool that was shaping, as well being shaped by, political parties' discourse. Thus, the present investigation will seek to analyse online political communication during the 2021 electoral period, in order to understand political parties' usage of social media platforms. Particularly, the study will focus on the aforementioned issue of personalization, seeking to verify its presence as a strategy undertaken by political actors.

When investigating political discourse present in parties' social media posts, most existing and detailed literature in the matter focuses on an analysis of political discourse via Twitter. Nonetheless, it is to the author's belief that these insights and contributions can be extended to other social media platforms, as they have already been in certain studies. One such platform would be Instagram, using the application's audio-visual strengths, and the other TikTok, given the platform's novel nature and use by younger citizens. It is this possibility of extending the insights of existing academics into a relatively novel realm that is of extreme benefit to the author. It will definitely be an intellectual endeavour, but one that humbly hopes to understand the complex reality of online political communication as applied to Madrid.

The general goal of this dissertation is to understand political parties' communicative strategies in presenting their candidates via social media, by analysing their postings on Instagram and TikTok during the campaign period of the 2021 elections. Through this analysis, the study aims to verify the presence of personalization in political parties and their respective candidates' accounts. As to the specific goals of the investigation, this study aims to identify the different ways political parties, via candidates, present themselves in their social media posts. Within this (re)presentation, the study will aim to identify the different images through which candidates present their private, personal life, as well as their professional lives as politicians. Lastly, it will aim identify how other (rival) candidates are presented. Consequently, the study seeks to understand the ways in which private and professional personalization, as well as negative

personalization, is presented across different platforms, and their connections and implications within the wider political context.

When posed with the study of personalization, my research questions are the following:

- Do political parties present themselves to the electorate through their candidate?
- Which features of the candidate are presented, private and/or professional?

With these questions in mind, the study has two hypotheses that are expected to be confirmed with the analysis of the case studies. Firstly, it is expected that political parties will focus much of their posts on the candidate chosen for the autonomous community elections, particularly their candidate to the Presidency of Madrid. It is important to clarify that this study will not aim to analyse the presentation of other local leaders, such as mayors. Their emphasis on their potential presidential candidate would verify then the notion of personalization as a strategy with which the political landscape is presented by, and interpreted from, the individual politician representing a political party. Secondly, it is expected that the personalization present in candidates' personal accounts on Instagram will differ to those party accounts on TikTok. The study expects there to be a higher degree of private personalization in the personal accounts of candidates on Instagram, being a personal account of the political candidate, and a higher degree of professional personalization in the accounts on TikTok, being official accounts of the political party.

## 1.2 State of the Art

The present state of the art will examine all relevant publications of the study of social media campaign strategies in Spanish politics. Within it, the study will particularly look at studies examining the presence of personalization as applied to Spain. Existing literature that analyses –exclusively or in part– the issue of personalization in the Spanish political context is vast. Such studies include those focused on the presence of personalization in the press, in television, or even in electoral campaign spots. Nonetheless, the present study does not wish to analyse the presence (or lack thereof) of personalization in mainstream media, but rather on social media. Thus, this section will provide a contextualisation of the existing academic contributions on the issue of personalization on social media, which, in comparison to those of mainstream media, is



scarcer. This is why analysing if personalization in social media also happens in Spain, having been identified and studied in other countries, is difficult (Cervi, Marín-Lladó, 2021). The lack of widespread research makes it less clear to ascertain a wider trend in the Spanish context (ibid). Precisely, it is under this situation that the current investigation hopes to contribute to the still nascent academic debate of personalization in Spain.

Having said that, there is still some research of this phenomenon in Spain, with studies conducting investigations on various platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and, more recently, TikTok. These studies aim to understand the use of social media platforms by Spanish political parties, and within that general use, they include personalization as one of their variables of analysis.

In the case of Twitter, relevant studies such as those of López-Meri et al (2017) have analysed the ways in which parties have incorporated Twitter into their political communication strategies. López-Meri et al (2017) seek to verify existing literature that argues in favour of personalization as one of the main functions of Twitter. This is because in Twitter, politicians publish details on their private lives, as well as thoughts and emotions (Vergeer et al, 2011, as cited by López-Meri et al, 2017). However, personalization is also taken to be present in these platforms because it implies a shift from the party to the candidate, and it is precisely in these media that candidates are able to use these platforms, with their individual voice (López-Meri et al, 2017). Taking this into account, they analyse the publications of the four main candidates on the 2016 elections, taking Mariano Rajoy as the candidate for the Popular Party (PP), Pedro Sánchez as the candidate for the socialist party (PSOE), Pablo Iglesias as the representative of Podemos party, and lastly, Albert Rivera as the representative of Ciudadanos. Amongst their results they conclude that the use of Twitter for personalization was not widespread. Precisely, it was not a defining feature of Twitter as used by Spanish political parties. Nonetheless, they do find that in the case of Podemos' candidate, Iglesias, it is very much present. His publications and use of the platform connects his party, via candidate, to voters. As well, he published tweets concerning his private life, tastes, interests, feelings and emotions.

However, other studies that analyse the same platform, Twitter, reach different conclusions. Precisely, the investigation conducted by Jivkova-Semova et al (2017) argues differently: personalization is incredibly significant in political parties' strategies

in social media. The study takes too the cases of Podemos, Ciudadanos, PP, and PSOE, but they add the leftist party Izquierda Unida (IU). They analyse, in turn, the campaign strategies for the 2015 elections, taking Twitter as their main platform. Jivkova et al (2017) find that there is a strong presence of personalization. Moreover, they introduce a novelty in their analysis of personalization; precisely, they gage the motivations that might lead to this use of personalization, and argue that it is done by parties to humanize the candidate and present them as honest and authentic. Many times, they employ humour to achieve this. The parties that are argued to exploit this to the fullest would be Ciudadanos and Izquierda Unida. This differs then to López-Meri's (2017) results.

Furthermore, scholars have analysed the platform of Facebook as another key media in parties' political communication strategies during campaigns. López-Meri et al (2020) analyse the functions given to Facebook by these parties during the electoral campaign for the 2016 elections. Amongst their findings, they include references to personalization. Precisely, they identify a growing trend towards personalization and community building in the platform, which serves to humanize candidates and promote the values and ideology of parties. Their investigation takes the cases of the Popular Party, with Mariano Rajoy as their candidate, PSOE, with Pedro Sánchez as their candidate, Albert Rivera as Ciudadanos' candidate, Pablo Iglesias as Podemos' candidate, and lastly, Alberto Garzón as Izquierda Unida's candidate. Regarding the presence of personalization, López-Meri (2020) finds that in fact, the degree of personalization that was present in Facebook is indeed notable. Significantly enough, they find that it was higher than that of Twitter, comparing the previous results analysed by the same scholar, López-Meri, in 2017. Both these investigations relate to the same elections. This is a very pertinent issue to take into account, for it points towards a more nuanced understanding of personalization in Spanish politics across different social media platforms.

Regarding the use of Instagram, the study conducted by Pineda et al (2020) analyses the publications issued by Spanish political parties in the period spanning from September to December 2018. They analyse the posts of PSOE, PP, Ciudadanos and Podemos, and find that there is a strong presence of personalization in terms of the professional image of candidates, relegating the party to a secondary role. Nonetheless, in terms of privatization, being the characterization of leaders with their personal traits, and private lives, there is a notable absence of the phenomena, for there are no significant publications of leaders with their private persona. Since the period comprises both

electoral and non-electoral periods, they do find that the increase towards professional personalization is notable in electoral campaign periods. Here, it is interesting to note that only one type of personalization is present, being that which shifts the attention from the party to the candidate. However, the other type of personalization that relates to the private life of the politician, is not argued to be present.

In the case of TikTok, the most relevant, and only study to date is the one by Cervi and Marín-Lladó (2021). Both scholars analyse parties' general strategies on the new social media platform, taking the cases of PP, PSOE, Ciudadanos, Podemos, and Vox. Their time frame spans from March 2019 to October 2020. Thus, different to previous studies, they analyse the use of social media by parties in non-election campaign periods, and see if these parties sufficiently exploit TikTok's affordances, reaching young people, and being active in the platform. Within the multiple variables analysed, the scholars analyse the presence of personalization. On the one hand, they analyse private personalization (information about the private life of candidates, like family, or hobbies, non-political viscidudes), and on the other, professional personalization (traits and activities of the candidate that are directly in tune with his/her role as a politician). Their investigation finds that parties like PP or Ciudadanos do not promote personalization in their publications, as they clearly emphasise and highlight the party. Nonetheless, Podemos and Vox do promote personalization in their communications strategy, with posts centred on the political actors themselves. Regarding the private personalization, they argue that the private and personal life of candidates is not really presented in the platform. Even in the cases of Podemos and Vox, the political candidates and actors are always shown first and foremost as political figures.

Lastly, a novel study that analyses the use of social media by political parties in autonomic elections is the one conducted by Rivas-de-Roca (2021). The scholar analyses the use of Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram by the Galician nationalist BNG (Bloque Nacionalista Gallego) for the 2020 elections. The study's results showcase how the BNG's accounts are characterised by the use of personalization. The publications on the party's account focus on the female candidate, Ana Pontón, both in her professional capacity as a politician, as in her private life, with videos of the candidate in her home, as well as sharing her trajectory to politics. The presentation of Pontón in her private life is argued by the study to be a strategy that humanizes her more, as well as presents her as a trustworthy and authentic candidate to voters. She positions herself as another normal

Galician, and thus makes herself more approachable to the electorate. This strategy of personalization is confirmed to be present across various platforms, though most notably on BNG's Twitter account.

Some conclusions can be gathered from the current state of art of personalization: each study presents different conclusions on the presence, or lack thereof, of personalization in social media. Thus, reinforcing that lack of clear and robust evidence which could point towards a growing trend on personalization in Spanish social media politics. Whilst at first this assertion can seem contradictory, for the presence of personalization seems to vary from study to study, it can nonetheless suggest some useful insights on the matter. The first, that personalization varies from platform to platform. Precisely, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and TikTok differ in the degree in which they present the issue of personalization. Furthermore, even the type of personalization that can be seen is different: private personalization, or professional personalization. The second insight is that personalization is used differently by Spanish political parties. Precisely, parties that are argued to use it include Podemos and IU, whilst other traditional, well-established parties like PP and PSOE are argued to have low levels of private personalization.

A further insight that can be gathered from the state of art is the fact that most studies have focused on the use of Twitter by Spanish political parties in order to gauge the presence of personalization. Consequently, those dedicated to other platforms have been scarcer, especially the ones relating to Instagram and TikTok. Once again, it is in this state of the art that the present investigation is positioned. It aims to contribute to existing research on personalization in the Spanish context, by analysing less researched platforms like Instagram and TikTok.

### 1.3 Theoretical Framework

The present investigation will take the theory of personalization of politics as a guide in its analysis of the 2021 social media campaign strategies. Overall, we can say that, even if differing definitions over the exact matter of personalization arise, there is a clear point in common which concerns the increasing presence and visibility of the individual in politics, in which all facets of the political individual (including his/her private life or their 'non-political' traits) are presented. In sum, the government is

perceived by the electorate through the leader, not the political party itself (McAllister, 2007). In terms of institutional designs that are more or less affected by this trend, McAllister (2007) argues that both Presidential and Parliamentary systems have been, and remain to this day, affected by the personalization of politics. Thus, the issue of personalization is one that applies broadly, with no distinction of political system.

Regarding the origins of personalization, some scholars as McAllister (2007) argue that it would be in Thatcher's and Reagan's election in the United Kingdom and United States, that the trend towards personalization starts to be seen. Both leaders gain visibility due to their strong personality and charisma, which end up eclipsing even that of their original parties (ibid). Nonetheless, they also point towards the role of media and communication platforms in highlighting the figure of the politician and thus of personalization. Originally, personalization of politics has been traced to the irruption of the television in the 1950s and 1960s (McAllister, 2007). Yet, some scholars disagree with this view, such as Rebolledo (2017), and argue that personalisation is in fact a longer and deep-rooted process in our societies, even citing Napoleon's military campaign as an example of personalization pre-20<sup>th</sup> century. Still, the irruption of the television has to be recognised, for it would undoubtedly change the reach of personalization in politics.

It is in this fixation with the figure of the leader or politician, that, according to some scholars, enters the fixation with the *image* of said leader or politician (Rebolledo, 2017). Precisely, some point towards the aforementioned irruption of the television in the US as a game changer in the relations between citizens and politicians, emphasising the importance of the image of these political leaders for the electorate (Keeter, 1987; Brants and Voltmer, 2011). Whilst the official origins would be placed on the irruption of the TV, as stated by McAllister, personalization has exponentially augmented its impacts and presence since then, thanks to the irruption of audio-visual technologies (ibid). This is why personalization is studied as a process that manifests itself in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, consolidates in the 60s, and rises since the 1990s (ibid).

In terms of providing an actual definition about the personalization of politics, it is important to note that there are some disagreements within the academia. Different scholars understand personalization in different ways. The present study will take some of the scholarly contributions on the personalization arena, choosing those that pertain to the case study analysis, but acknowledging that these are but a sample of all research that

exists on the issue. For more information on the matter, Rebolledo (2017) provides an effective and broader contextualization of personalization as broached by the academia.

Rahat and Sheaffer analyse personalization as “a process in which the weight of the individual actor in the political arena increases over time, while the centrality of the political group, such as the political party, decreases” (2007, p.65). Here we see an understanding of personalization as a process that signals the shift in roles and influence between parties and individuals and understanding. Something that has been also shared by other scholars like McAllister (2006), previously cited.

Another more concrete example is provided by Rico, who studies personalization as a process that manifests the private characteristics of politicians, being “those aspects of the candidate that do not have a specifically political content and that emanate from or are attributable to the candidate's person” (2009, p.124). These private traits include personality, external appearance, sociodemographic characteristics, personal biography, and private life. He also regards these personal characteristics as ‘non-political’ ones, but it is important to note that when he uses the term ‘non-political’, he regards them as such because they do not explicitly equate to public policy or political results (Rebolledo, 2017). Nonetheless, he does believe that their ‘non-political’ nature, like they private life for example, can have an impact in the political arena. An issue that will become prevalent further along in the investigation of the 2021 elections.

Other scholars like Van Zoonen and Holtz-Bacha continue with the link between non-political traits and private characteristics of politicians. They analyse personalization as “a complex interplay between the personal characteristics of politicians and their mediation through various institutional practices such as campaign strategies and media coverage, through which voters will construct their perceptions of politicians” (2000, p.47). Holtz-Bacha (2014) would further nuance the political characteristics present in the individual figure of the politician, being charisma, integrity, or humility and kindness, and the characteristics pertaining to the private life of the leader, being family, physical appearance, religion, and lifestyle.

In addition, other scholars offer different insights on the issue of personalization. Precisely, Mayerhöffer and Esmark (2011, as cited by Rebolledo, 2017) define personalization as “an orientation of political campaigns, media news and voters towards

a politics of personalities; it would therefore be an alternative communication that contrasts with the one centred on political institutions, issues or ideologies.” They understand as personality those traits that can be public (pertaining to leadership, for instance), or private (like humour, sexuality, or family). Again, it is a pertaining definition, for it takes into account both public and private manifestations of personalization (Rebolledo, 2017).

Within this context of personalization, it is of the utmost importance to this study to include certain evolutions of the term, or applications in specific electoral contexts, that have been developed by scholars. One such development is the phenomenon of “negative personalization”, as analysed by Garzia and da Silva (2021). In their investigation they present our current political context as one marked by growing polarization in politics and across the electorate.

Garzia and Silva (2021) still maintain the hypothesis presented by other scholars that personalization is indeed one of the phenomena that marks current politics, but with their negative personalization thesis, they take the theory further. Traditional personalization studies focused on how political leaders have become crucial figures to understand the political landscape, and consequently, secure votes for their electorate. This means that there is a positive connotation, or even like, associated to personalization and to politicians in their role to drive voters’ choices. However, both scholars contend that there is another side to personalization too, for it can also promote a dislike in political behaviour and voting. As defined by their study, negative personalization is understood as “*the increasing tendency for voters’ party choice to be shaped by their negative evaluations of the leaders of other parties*” (p.3). In such a polarized, conflictual and competitive political context that is argued to have been primed by media and political parties, the electorate’s vote is now increasingly shaped by a vote against one candidate and his/her political party (so as to prevent them from reaching government), instead of a vote for a candidate and his/her political party (ibid).

Negative personalization is closely linked to the phenomenon of negative campaigning, which is another strategy undertaken by political parties. Political parties choose to criticise and emphasize the weaknesses of their competitors to the electorate, instead of focusing on their own strengths and proposals (Haselmayer, 2019). Thus, leading to increased conflict within the political debate. This phenomenon is

complementary to Garzia and Silva's negative personalization research, for one could say that one is borne out of the other. By using negative campaigning, political parties are priming the electorate to vote against a political party, instead of shaping their vote as one that is for a specific party. Within this negative campaigning, there is not only a negative characterisation of the political party, but a negative characterisation of the candidate that represents the rival party. As the theory of personalization argues, the political party ends up being perceived through the individual that represents it. In this case, the negative characterisation of the party can be viewed through a negative characterisation of the candidate itself.

Furthermore, other scholarly contributions have to be taken into consideration, for they have shaped new understandings of personalization. Precisely, social media platforms are argued to have further intensified personalization as a trend. Because of this, some academics have developed the phenomenon of popularization or 'pop politics' as an evolution of personalization into the current context of social media. Whilst television was understood as the platform of personalization, social media are considered to be the platform of popularization (Rebolledo, 2017). The first scholars that analysed in depth this phenomenon of popularization would be Mazzoleni and Sfardini, asserting that "pop politics means that, largely because of the role played by television, the facts and people, the stories and words that traditionally belong to politics - which is generally seen as a complex terrain of self-reference, as a world that is far removed from the everyday lives of ordinary people - have increasingly become topics of general interest, opportunities for entertainment, in the same way as the characters and people who are already part of the world of show business" (2009, p.14, cited by Rebolledo, 2017).

Ceccobelli provides another definition that further clarifies the link between personalization and popularization, and thus it is useful for the present investigation. The scholar asserts that the popularization of political communication is a "communicative action through which political actors try to communicate with citizens less interested in the news, in the actors, and in the dynamics related to the field of politics. Two different modalities are distinguished - popularization as a style or as a type of communication - and can be realized mainly through three types of strategies: 1) the appeal to people and visciditudes related to the *private life* of the political actor 2) the use and interaction with media environments, rhetoric and actors belonging to the world of television, music, sport and movie celebrities, 3) the reproduction and interpretation of the lifestyles and daily



life of citizens, or the customary dominant practices concerning popular culture” (2014, p.5, as cited by Rebolledo, 2017).

It is then clear that the body of research in academia that studies the trend of personalization is very much widespread, and these nuances from scholar to scholar must be taken into account in order to grasp the full picture of the personalization phenomenon. Nonetheless, it is necessary as well to take the recent ‘popularization’ paradigm into account, for it also roots itself, amongst other variables, on the issue of personalization. Having to select one of the two as the main theoretical lens of the dissertation, the present study chooses to follow the theory of personalization in the case studies. It does so because it wishes to continue with the existing state of art that analyses personalization in online campaign strategies of Spanish political parties. These studies mostly use the phenomenon of personalization, not popularization, as a variable of analysis. Hence, choosing popularization, which, granted, does include the issue of personalization, is not of the present studies’ interest. The body of research that might apply the theory of popularization to the Spanish case is, as of date, not as consolidated.

## **2. Methodology**

In order to analyse the social media strategies concerning personalization in the 2021 elections, the current study will take into consideration primary sources and secondary sources. The primary sources will be the social media posts themselves posted by official accounts on Instagram and TikTok platforms. The timeframe of these posts will be that of the campaign period, whereby the political context in Madrid was mostly characterised by the upcoming elections. To do this, the study will take as the initial date the 10<sup>th</sup> of March, when Ayuso called for early elections. The concluding date will be the 4<sup>th</sup> of March, being the date of the vote itself. Secondary sources may be taken into account too, in order to contextualise some of the events that characterise the electoral campaign. These can include press and journal articles, as well as information published by political parties in other mediums such as their official website.

Regarding primary sources, the study will choose the Instagram accounts of the candidates themselves, being the official account of Isabel Díaz Ayuso, Mónica García, and Rocío Monasterio. TikTok accounts will be used too, being those of the political party they represent, at the local level at Madrid or at the national level. The account of the

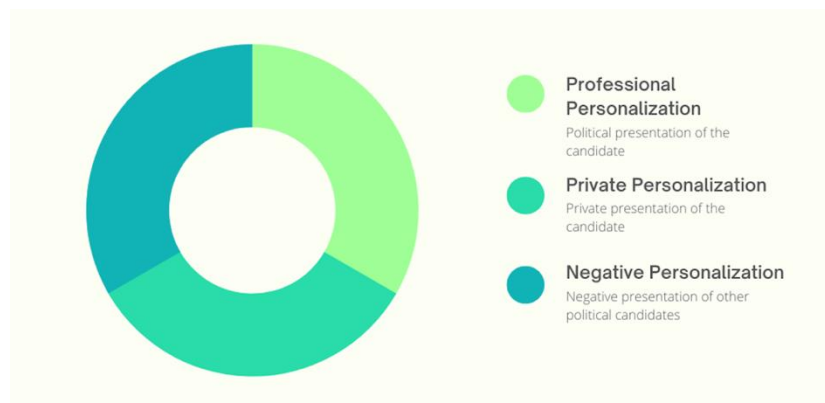
Popular Party in Madrid in TikTok will be used in conjunction with Díaz Ayuso's Instagram account. The account of Más Madrid in TikTok will be used in conjunction with Mónica García's Instagram account. In the case of VOX, the current study will not take the VOX Madrid account for it was not active with posts during the 2021 election. In order to remedy this limitation, the study has chosen to use the national account of VOX as a primary source. Whilst a national account could in principle derail from the purpose of the investigation, for the subject of it is local, autonomous community elections, the impact in these elections has not been significant in the results. This is because the call for early elections did not coincide with other electoral processes in other regions in the country, and thus the national account prioritised the promotion of Rocío Monasterio and VOX in light of the Madrid elections.

It will be from these sources that the study will employ a qualitative analysis of the publications themselves, by verifying the presence of personalization in the social media strategies conducted by political parties. Qualitative analyses in social media studies refer to “non-numerical aspects of social media activities, such as the sentiment, tone, and quality of content” (Lee, n.d.). This way, the present study aims to do an analysis of the thematic content of social media publications that are concerned with the issue of personalization. The unit of analyses is the post itself, being the video or photo content and/or the caption that accompanies it. This investigation will not focus on the content of the comments themselves, or engagement from the part of social media users in reaction to the post, due to limitations on the extension and resources of the study. Nonetheless, it is acknowledged as a relevant unit of analysis for future investigations.

In order to verify the presence or lack thereof of personalization in social media strategies, the study has used existing contributions in the theory of personalization to create an analysis of social media posts along three main axes, as shown in Figure 1. These would be professional personalization, private personalization, and negative personalization. This analysis of personalization structured along the private and professional axes is done following the aforementioned study of Cervi and Marín-Lladó (2021). Cervi and Marín-Lladó (2021) are inspired in turn by other personalization scholars like Metz, Kruikemeier and Lecheler (2020), that hold similar views regarding the professional and private nature of the phenomenon. Professional personalization, as stated by the scholars, involves “qualities and individual activities related to the official role” (Cervi, Marín-Lladó, 2021, p.6) of politicians. Private personalization, in turn, “can

be defined as personal information about the private persona” (p.6), including those mentions to the private life of candidates. Additionally, the present study believes that it is of the utmost interest to analyse too how other candidates are perceived and characterised. In this sense, the issue of negative personalization and negative campaigning is taken into consideration.

Whilst the analysis of these posts could include other issues pertaining to personalization and veer towards other themes, the investigation focuses on these three ‘types’ of personalization. First of all, given the personal interest in these three types of personalization, which connect with overarching themes of the theory as broached by several scholars. Secondly, it does so given the extension of the study and the considerable number of case studies and platforms selected, whereby a more generalist approach and analysis is prioritized, as a way of providing a bird’s eye view of the issue of personalization in Spanish online electoral contexts.



*Figure 1: Axes of personalization.*  
*Source: own elaboration*

Regarding **professional personalization**, this study will focus on the way in which political parties present the candidate in their day-to-day, political life. That is, their political presentation. These include the strictly political functions they undergo in representation of the party, be it in interventions in political assemblies, interviews, or public meetings. In this sense, it is also of the utmost relevance to verify one of the issues brought forth by scholars of personalization, being the shift in focus from the party to the candidate, as the relevant figure to interpret the political context. To verify the presence of professional personalization in the political posts, the study will analyse if indeed the communication strategy undergone by the party is one that shifts the focus to the

candidate of the autonomous community elections, or if the party, and other members of it, remain protagonists in the campaign.

Regarding **private personalization**, this study will analyse the way in which candidates are presented in their private life, with non-political characteristics. This includes their families, friends, hobbies, and other activities that give a sense into the non-political life of politicians. It is thus a second manifestation of what personalization entails, for it is not only relevant to analyse the way in which the political debate shifts from party to candidate, but rather how the political candidate is presented. This presentation, as argued, includes the private life of said candidates, humanising them to their electorate and making them seem more approachable.

Lastly, regarding **negative personalization**, it is to the utmost interest of this study to analyse not only how the candidates' present themselves to the electorate, but rather how they (re)present others. Taking this issue into consideration, this investigation will analyse how candidates and parties alike use social media to represent other candidates in a negative light, as a way to prime electorates and voters to vote against a specific party and candidate (normally taken to be their rival). It is another manifestation of personalization, for it also shifts the political debate and discourse from the party to the individual politician, but in this case it is done so in a negative light, so as to deter citizens from voting a particular candidate. As will be demonstrated later in the analysis and discussion, this was an issue especially prevalent in the 2021 Madrid elections.


### **3. Isabel Díaz Ayuso (Popular Party)**

#### **3.1 Context on the candidate and party**

Isabel Natividad Díaz Ayuso (17th October 1978) is a politician born and raised in Madrid. She holds a degree in Journalism, and a master's in Political Communication and Protocol (Santos, Rico, n.d.). She has a thorough experience working in the communications' department of several enterprises and foundations, as well as in radio and press (Partido Popular, n.d.). She jumped into politics in 2011, as a congresswoman in the Madrid Assembly for the right-wing Popular Party (PP), and in 2019 she would obtain the Presidency of the autonomous community (Santos, Rico, n.d.).




As opposed to the other two candidates, the presentation tag of Ayuso in the official PP website is one that highlights her professional, public achievements, with no mention of private characteristics of the President. As perceived in Figure 2, her presentation card highlights her experience in the communications sector, but also her experience within the Popular Party, as a consultant to the Presidency of Madrid, and also as the manager of the Communications (‘Área de Internet’). She currently holds the post of secretary of National Communication for the party.

**Isabel Natividad Díaz Ayuso**



**CARGOS**

- Portavoz del PP de MADRID (COMUNIDAD DE)
- Diputado/a de MADRID (COMUNIDAD DE)
- Presidente/a CCAA de MADRID (COMUNIDAD DE)

▼ Ocultar biografía

Madrid, 17 de octubre de 1978  
Isabel Natividad DÍAZ AYUSO  
Licenciada en Periodismo. Diploma de Estudios Avanzados por la Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Máster en Comunicación Corporativa. Miembro del Comité Ejecutivo, de la Junta Directiva Regional y responsable del Área de Internet del Partido Popular de Madrid. Ha trabajado como asesora técnica del Gabinete de la Presidenta de la Comunidad de Madrid, asesora de Madrid.org y de la Vicepresidencia Segunda y Consejería de Justicia e Interior. Ha trabajado en departamentos de comunicación de varias empresas y fundaciones, así como en emisoras de radio y prensa digital en España, Ecuador e Irlanda. Claustal de la Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Miembro de la Asociación Atlántica Española.  
Actualmente es candidata a la Presidencia de la Comunidad de Madrid, así como secretaria de Comunicación del PP Nacional tras la celebración del XIX Congreso Nacional.

*Figure 2: Biography Isabel Natividad Díaz Ayuso.  
Source: Partido Popular, n.d.*

### 3.2 Instagram

In terms of **private personalization**, the study found that there was a significant level of private personalization which showed the candidate outside of her political duties. This included several posts of the candidate with her dog and having a beer (that has her faced inscribed on it). Other such posts, included in Annex I, further showcase Ayuso’s private personalization, including photos of presents received from her supporters, photos of her visiting local businesses, and photos with children. Private personalization is something that, as highlighted by previous studies, presents her in a more humane light, and makes her more approachable to citizens in Madrid. Indeed, it clearly exemplifies the notion of personalization as a way into the private life of politicians, displaying the candidate’s likes and hobbies. Furthermore, they showcase Díaz Ayuso as a candidate that connects with the citizens of the region. In such a way several voters are more likely

to connect to her, by sharing similar tastes, or simply by perceiving her to be a politician that is close to her citizens.



isabeldiazayuso  Hoy Bolbo y yo comemos en Jorge Juan, distrito de Salamanca.


.  
. .  
. .  
. .  
. .

#Madrid #AmoMadrid #hostelería #restauración #dogs #dogslover #instadaily #instaday #perros

Editado · 115 sem

*Figure 4: Isabel Díaz Ayuso and her dog.*  
*Source: Ayuso, I. D. (2021a, March 12)*



isabeldiazayuso  Tomándome La Caña de España.

.  
. .  
. .  
. .  
. .

#madrid #comunidaddemadrid #lacañadeespaña #cerveza #bares #baresmadrid

Editado · 110 sem

*Figure 3: Isabel Díaz Ayuso posing with a beer.*  
*Source: Ayuso, I. D. (2021e, April 15)*

**Professional personalization** was also found to be present in Ayuso’s account, with a high level of posts following Ayuso in her day-to-day political life. Examples include posts of Ayuso in meetings, events, or calling for volunteers to join the political communication team. This is further exemplified in Annex I, with examples of the candidate holding political meetings in neighbourhoods in the city or visiting hospitals as part of her duties in the community. Hence, political content related to the Popular Party is one that still highlights the presence of Ayuso. This entails a clear shift from the party towards the candidate, verifying the presence of this type of personalization. Notwithstanding, the Popular Party still remains an important actor in the political debate, but the focus is on Isabel Díaz Ayuso as the candidate that represents it.



Figure 6: Call for volunteers in the 2021 election.  
Source: Ayuso, I.D. (2021b, March 16)

isabeldiazayuso 🌐 Vamos a unirnos.  
682529961  
4 de mayo.



Figure 5: Isabel Díaz Ayuso at a political meeting.  
Source: Ayuso, I.D. (2021f, April 17)

isabeldiazayuso 🌐 Mañana empieza la campaña. Estamos preparados.  
#4M  
.  
.  
.  
.  
.  
#Madrid #ComunidadDeMadrid #Libertad  
#elecciones4demayo #picoftheday #instadaily  
@partidopopular  
110 sem

**Negative personalization**, curiously enough, did not have a prominent role in the Instagram account. There were no significant number of posts characterising political opponents in a negative light. This is noticeable, since the framing and motto itself of Díaz Ayuso’s campaign, being ‘Communism or Freedom’, ‘*Comunismo o Libertad*’ in Spanish, was indeed a negative personalization and negative campaigning construct.

Indeed, Isabel Díaz Ayuso reacted to the possibility of Pablo Iglesias, political candidate to the 2021 elections for the left-wing party Podemos, becoming President (Muro, Moya, 2021). Ayuso constructed her campaign accordingly, and framed the vote as one where citizens had to choose between freedom for the autonomous community of Madrid, ensured with a vote to her and the Popular Party, or communism, argued to be represented in the figure of Pablo Iglesias. Communism was, argued by Ayuso, to be synonymous with regression, chaos, and revolution (Muro, Moya, 2021). The spot itself

that exemplified the values of the campaign of Díaz Ayuso was published on Instagram (Ayuso, 2021d) but also TikTok. The spot, in fact, shows a significant degree of private personalization, as it follows the candidate running across the city, reflecting that freedom of movement and vitality within the autonomous community that she argues in her campaign.

### 3.3 TikTok

In terms of **private personalization**, the study found scarce examples of the party characterising Díaz Ayuso in her private day-to-day life. Thus, this private personalization is notably absent in the official party account. The only instance of it that can be mentioned is shown in Figure 7, as a post of a birthday cake with Díaz Ayuso's face on it. Here it is possible to identify this interplay between private personalization, showing a non-political symbol as is a cake, with professional personalization, being a visual representation of the campaign motto with the candidate's face. A fact that is also present in some Instagram posts, as shown in Annex I.

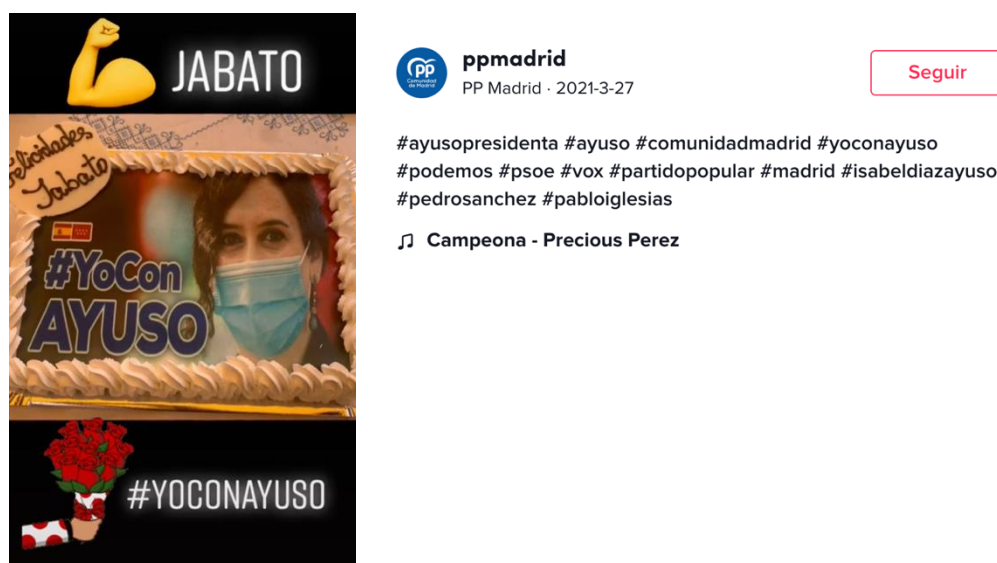


Figure 7: Cake of Isabel Díaz Ayuso.  
Source: Partido Popular Madrid (2021b, March 27)

In terms of **professional personalization**, the study found that there was a significant level detected in the party's TikTok account. This entailed a shift from the Popular Party towards Ayuso. Several posts were published following the candidate in official statements or accompanied by prominent politicians of the party. Nonetheless, it is true that the account featured other prominent figures in the Popular Party like Ana



Camins or Almudena Negro, as shown in Annex I. This entails a presence of professional personalization, but without outshining the party itself. This marks a shift towards the professional personalization encountered in Díaz Ayuso’s Instagram account, and even towards other political parties’ usage of TikTok. Because of this, professional personalization is not as salient in this case, but it does retain a significant role.



Figure 9: Isabel Díaz Ayuso gives public statement.  
Source: Partido Popular Madrid (2021c, March 28)



Figure 8: Ayuso 2021 campaign - #Libertad.  
Source: Partido Popular Madrid (2021d, March 30)

In terms of **negative personalization**, the study detected a high degree of negative characterization of other political candidates. In particular, most of the (negative) spotlight was shined against Pablo Iglesias, which is to be expected following the Framing

of Ayuso's 'Comunismo o Libertad'. Moreover, given the stark ideological contrast between both parties, it was to be expected that Podemos would be picked as a political rival to be discredited using the negative personalization scheme. The objective is to completely discredit Iglesias, and thus accusations range from him being a liar to even being homophobic, as shown in Figures 10 and 11.

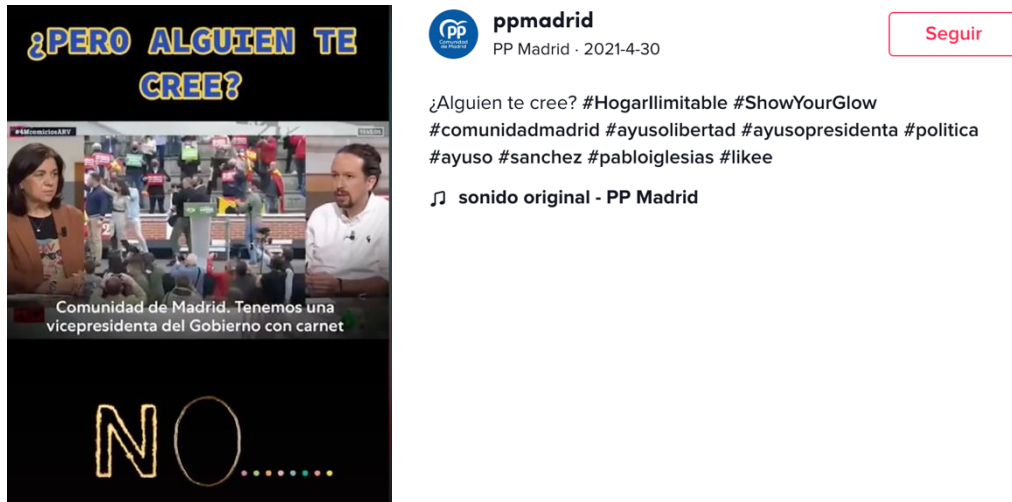


Figure 10: Negative personalization of Pablo Iglesias (I).  
Source: Partido Popular Madrid (2021i, April 30)



Figure 11: Negative personalization of Pablo Iglesias (II).  
Source: Partido Popular Madrid (2021<sup>a</sup>, March 20)


Nonetheless, as shown in Annex I, other figures such as Ángel Gabilondo, candidate from the socialist PSOE, were also included in this negative personalization, as well as national government politicians such as María Jesús Montero, or the national President Pedro Sánchez. The objective here was to negatively frame the opposition of

all rivals to the Popular Party. This entails a diversification of the negative personalization scheme, which is not present in other parties such as Más Madrid.

## 4. Rocío Monasterio (VOX)

### 4.1 Context on the candidate and party

**Rocío Monasterio (Presidente)**



**REDES SOCIALES**

- Twitter: @monasterioR
- Facebook
- Youtube
- Flickr

Rocío Monasterio San Martín es diputada y portavoz de VOX en la Asamblea de Madrid. De padre cubano -de ascendencia asturiana- y madre española, nació en Madrid, el 4 de febrero de 1974. Está casada con Iván Espinosa de los Monteros, con quien tiene cuatro hijos.

Es miembro de VOX desde 2014. Desde 2016 preside VOX Madrid y, dentro del Comité de Acción Política del partido es responsable del desarrollo del programa de Asuntos Sociales: ponencia de familia, violencia de género, igualdad, defensa de la vida, custodia compartida e inmigración.

Desde 2019, es portavoz del GPVOX en la Asamblea de Madrid. En menos de dos años, la formación ha obtenido grandes logros parlamentarios impulsando rebajas fiscales como la mejor medida para crear riqueza y empleo, medidas destinadas a luchar contra el coronavirus y, en general, presionando al Gobierno para reduzca el gasto político superfluo para poder invertir los recursos en lo verdaderamente necesario: Sanidad, Educación, Dependencia y Emergencia social.

Licenciada en Arquitectura por la Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, está especializada en Ordenación del Territorio, Urbanismo y Medio Ambiente. Fue profesora ayudante de Proyectos Arquitectónicos en la Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura de Madrid (ETSAM) y obtuvo una beca de la Fundación Camuñas para el curso superior para ayudantes de proyectos. En 2009 se colegió en el Colegio de Arquitectos de Madrid (COAM).

Tras trabajar en varios estudios de Madrid y Florida (EEUU), en el año 2002 fundó la empresa 'Luxury Rentals', dedicada al mercado inmobiliario. También desde el 2000 es propietaria y fundadora de 'Rocío Monasterio y Asociados', una consultoría de arquitectura e interiorismo con más de 100 proyectos realizados de viviendas, locales y oficinas.

Además de su actividad en VOX, fue fundadora de la Plataforma por las Libertades, entidad dedicada a combatir la imposición de la ideología de género, y del Foro Generación del 78, una asociación que tiene como objeto promover el libre intercambio de ideas con personalidades vinculadas al ámbito político, económico, empresarial, social y cultural. Colabora también con la Fundación Renacimiento Demográfico y con la Fundación Madrina, que se dedica a ayudar a mujeres embarazadas y familias con niños en riesgo de exclusión y en situación de crisis, soledad, abandono o violencia.

*Figure 12: Biography Rocío Monasterio.*

*Source: VOX Madrid, (n.d.)*

Rocío Monasterio (4<sup>th</sup> February 1974) is a politician born in Madrid to a Cuban father and a Spanish mother. She holds a degree in Architecture, and a master's in Urban and Regional Planning (VOX Madrid, n.d.). She jumped into politics in 2019 as a representative for the right-wing political party VOX and has held her position since.

In her presentation card in the party's website, as reflected in Figure 12, Monasterio presents an array of public, private, and professional achievements. She is a mother of four, spoused with Iván Espinosa de los Monteros, also a political member of VOX. She has developed most of her professional career around her background on architecture, as with her consulting firm 'Monasterio y Asociados', or her other enterprise 'Luxury Rentals'.

She also makes mention of other commitments she has besides the party that nonetheless reflect a certain ideological positioning. Her post in VOX Madrid is one where she is responsible for social matters such as family, gender violence, equality, pro-life policies, shared custody and immigration. This is something that is reflected by the party in her subsequent commitments and collaborations outside VOX. Precisely, the presentation tag on Monasterio mentions her founding of the 'Plataforma por las Libertades', which is argued to be involved in gender issues (VOX Madrid, n.d.). Monasterio also collaborates with other foundations such as 'Fundación Renacimiento Demográfico' or 'Fundación Madrina', which help the inclusion of marginalized pregnant women and their families and children in vulnerable situations.

#### 4.2 Instagram

In terms of **private personalization**, the study found that there was a significant level of private personalization which showed the candidate outside of her political duties and characterised her in a more humane, and 'normal' light. Monasterio posted several photos with her husband, her children, her dog, and friends. In such a way, Monasterio also presents herself as an approachable individual to the electorate, even relatable. The study highlights the particular use of private, family photos by the candidate, in such a way that besides characterising Monasterio in her non-political duties, also reflects the importance of family for the candidate.

This is a value that, nonetheless, holds political significance, since it connects with her commitments to VOX and her Committee on Political Action. It is also something that is done in a strategic manner, for she also differentiates herself in this regard from other candidates such as Mónica García, who define themselves too as mothers and politicians. Monasterio uses social media to not only characterise herself in her private, family life, but to do so in a way that negatively portrays other politicians like Mónica

García. Figure 13 is an example of this, whereby Monasterio reacts to García making the same emphasis of political and family duties, and criticises her for “repeating it” at official events (Monasterio, R., 2021j).



rociomonasteriovox 🌊 ¡25 años juntos y 20 casados! Gracias @ivanedlm por todos estos años juntos maravillosos y por esta familia maravillosa. A ver si hoy nos coordinamos para cenar aunque sea en la furgo de campaña 🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔 🙏 ¡luego te paso mi geolocalización!

109 sem

Figure 13: Rocío Monasterio and her husband.  
Source: Monasterio, R. (2021i, April 27)



rociomonasteriovox 🌊 ¡Y yo sin enterarme! Las niñas dicen que han vacunado a todos los muñecos, gatos, perros...etc. Aquí hay tiempo para todo. Después de este paréntesis volvemos a salir corriendo a 13TV, esta noche a las 23:00. Así es la campaña, intensa. Menos mal que las madres de familia numerosa estamos entrenadas a correr sin parar, entrenadas en la fortaleza mental y física 🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔 y no vamos a los debates repitiendo eso de “soy médica y madre” 🤔

109 sem

Figure 14: Rocío Monasterio and her family.  
Source: Monasterio, R. (2021j, April 29)

In terms of **professional personalization**, the study found that there was a significant level detected in the candidate’s Instagram account. Monasterio published a high number of posts following her day-to-day political life, such as meetings and interviews, as well as posts of her campaign team, as illustrated in Annex II. In such a sense there is a clear shift from the party towards the candidate, verifying the presence of this type of personalization in Monasterio’s personal account. Nonetheless, there are other party figures that are also referenced, like the president of VOX, Santiago Abascal, as

shown in Figures 15 and 16. This is something that closely follows Mónica García’s professional use of Instagram.





 rociomonasteriovox  ¡Domingo en Móstoles! Contamos con vosotros 😊  
110 sem

Figure 15: Banner publicizing campaign event.  
Source: Monasterio, R. (2021e, April 17)



 rociomonasteriovox  ¡Gracias a todos los vecinos de Leganes! Fue maravilloso ayer vuestro recibimiento. Estamos juntos en la defensa de la España que madruga, de la #seguridad y la #libertad. #ProtegeMadrid  
110 sem

Figure 16: Leganés Meeting.  
Source: Monasterio, R. (2021d, May 3)

In terms of **negative personalization**, the study detected a high degree of negative characterization of other political candidates. Particularly, Monasterio focused on Pablo Iglesias as the main target of her negative campaign. Several publications, such as Figure 17, make reference to the left-wing politician, framing the elections as the opportunity to ‘kick out’ Iglesias from the Presidency in Madrid. This closely follows Díaz Ayuso’s framing of the 2021 elections, which is to be expected given that both these political

formations have as their political ‘rivals’ left-wing parties. Nonetheless, as appreciated in Annex II, the target of negative personalization goes beyond Iglesias, even reaching other prominent figures of the national government.



 rociomonasteriovox  Comenzamos la campaña haciendo lo que prometimos para la legislatura: echando a Pablo Iglesias.  
109 sem

*Figure 17: Negative personalization of Pablo Iglesias (III).*  
*Source: Monasterio, R. (2021g, April 23)*

Another especially prevalent example used for negative campaigning was that of the Vallecas’ meeting incident. VOX held a meeting the 7<sup>th</sup> of April in the neighborhood of Vallecas, in Madrid. Choosing this particular neighborhood to present their candidacy to the Madrid elections was a controversial choice from the beginning, for the neighborhood is typically associated to left-wing formations, such as Más Madrid, PSOE, or Podemos, not parties like VOX (Galaup, Ortiz, 2021). The heated discussion around their presence only worsened the day itself of the meeting, which ended up with violent demonstrations by locals that were against VOX. The result was two detainees, 17 civilians and one police officer wounded (ibid). The very moment that the incidents happened, VOX pointed to the Government and other left-wing formations as the ones responsible for the incident (ibid). It was thus a narrative carried out by the party itself, as well as Rocío Monasterio, as shown in Figure 18. In this specific post, the negative personalization carried out is that of the national president Pedro Sánchez and Pablo Iglesias.



rociomonasteriovox 🇵🇸 Sánchez se asocia con delincuentes para formar gobierno, Iglesias nos señala y sus brigadas nos lapidan. Es resto del trabajo sucio lo hacen los medios que blanquean la violencia y algunos políticos asquerosamente equidistantes. Ya sabéis lo que más les duele: la existencia de VOX. Ni un paso atrás. 🇵🇸

111 sem

Figure 18: Vallecas meeting - negative personalization.  
 Source: Monasterio, R. (2021b, April 9)

### 4.3 TikTok

VOX España's usage of TikTok is starkly different from that of Monasterio's Instagram account, for it was significantly less active during the campaign elections. This statement is accounted for upon the availability of posts recollected for the investigation. The poll number of posts published during the period to analyse was 4. Hence, it stands as a limitation in the usage of the platform by the political party during the campaign. In fact, it starkly contrasts with the amount of political content perceived in Monasterio's own Instagram account.

In terms of **private personalization**, the study found that there was a complete absence of private characterisation which showed the candidate outside of her political duties. Indeed, the only time Monasterio appears in those four posts she does so in a professional capacity, followed by the president of the political party, Santiago Abascal. Both posts are shown in the following illustrations, Figures 20 and 21.

In terms of **professional personalization**, the study found that there was a significant level of detected in the party's TikTok posts. Nonetheless, it is important to note that the first post concerning the party itself was centred on Santiago Abascal, as shown in Figure 20. This is significant, for such an emphasis could derail from the actual candidate in the elections, that Rocío Monasterio. The only other post that features



Monasterio exclusively is one of her in an interview, and it is a clip that negatively portrays Pablo Iglesias.



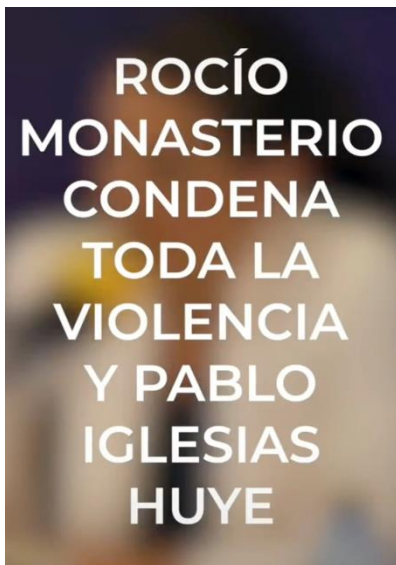
 **vox\_españa** ✓  
VOX España 🇪🇸 · 2021-4-19

#VOX #SantiagoAbascal #4M

🎵 sonido original - VOX España 🇪🇸

Seguir

Figure 20: Professional personalization of Santiago Abascal.  
Source: VOX España (2021b, April 19)



 **vox\_españa** ✓  
VOX España 🇪🇸 · 2021-4-23

#VOX #RocioMonasterio #PabloIglesias

🎵 sonido original - VOX España 🇪🇸

Seguir

Figure 19: Professional (and negative) personalization of Rocío Monasterio.  
Source: VOX España (2021c, April 23)

In terms of **negative personalization**, the aforementioned post of Monasterio is complemented with another one dedicated to Pablo Iglesias, shown in Figure 21. It stands as the first post that launches VOX's TikTok campaign, and features the left-wing politician in a negative light. It does so in the hopes of mobilizing voters so as to prevent Iglesias from reaching the Presidency.



 **vox\_espana**   
VOX España 🇪🇸 · 2021-4-12

#ProtegeMadrid #VOX 🇪🇸

🔊 sonido original - VOX España 🇪🇸

Seguir

*Figure 21: Negative personalization of Pablo Iglesias (IV).  
Source: VOX España (2021<sup>a</sup>, April 12)*

It is a relevant strategy to note then, for even with the limited number of posts, VOX still decided that this would be the post that would launch their 2021 campaign. By making this choice then, they set the tone for what will be the campaign period, one in which voters will be presented this negative perception of the opposition, characterised in the persona of Iglesias.

## 5. Mónica García (Más Madrid)

### 5.1 Context on the candidate and party

Monica García (16th January 1976) is a politician born and raised in Madrid. She was born to two psychiatrist parents (Linaza, 2023), and continued their legacy with her own path within the sanitary field. Such path includes a degree in Medicine and Surgery, and a master's in Medical and Clinical Management. She works as an anaesthetist in the hospital 12 de Octubre (Asamblea de Madrid, n.d.). Nonetheless, García also works for the political sector in the autonomous community of Madrid. Initially she worked as a congresswoman for the left-wing party Podemos in the Madrid Assembly, but she left the political group in 2019 for the newly founded party of Iñigo Errejón, Más Madrid (Marín, 2023). It was in this 2021 campaign that this left-wing group would surpass the traditionally well-established Socialist Party (PSOE). Their 2021 campaign heavily relied on her previous private, public, and professional experience: as a woman, mother of three, and medic (Marín, 2023).

This is something that is clearly reflected in the candidate's presentation available in Más Madrid's website, as shown in Figure 22. In it, García highlights her medical experience, but she does so in a way that clearly shows the influence of it in her ideological and political proposals. She makes mention of her ideological positioning rooted in feminism, empathy, and pluralism. She also makes mention of some of her more private traits, being a mother of three, and connects it to her political career, as a vocation that is borne out of a desire to leave them a better place.



*Figure 22: Biography Mónica García.  
Source: Más Madrid (n.d.)*

## 5.2 Instagram

In terms of **private personalization**, the study found that there was a high presence of private characterisation which delved into the private life of the candidate. Such postings included references to García's daughters, as well as her past as an athlete. They also included posts of the candidate in other informal settings, such as a bar having coffee, as shown in Annex III. The impact of it is quite significant, in that social media users are able to see a more personal and humane side of García that does not limit itself

to her work as a politician. Thus, it is possible to see her in a more approachable and relatable manner.



monicagarcia\_ 🌐 Empujando, trabajando para conectar la política con la gente y los asuntos del día a día de las madrileñas y madrileños.

Este #4M somos más.

110 sem

*Figure 23: Mónica García on the running track.*

*Source: García, M. (2021k, April 27)*



monicagarcia\_ 🌐 Las campañas son duras, pero cuando tienes un objetivo no dejas de empujar nunca.

El mío está claro: hacer de Madrid un lugar mejor para mis hijos y mi hija.

112 sem

*Figure 24: Mónica García and her family (I).*

*Source: García, M. (2021j, April 10)*

In terms of **professional personalization**, the study detected a high presence of publications that followed the political candidate in her day-to-day life as a politician. Such postings included meetings, visits, and general activities with her political party's counterparts, such as Rita Maestre and Pablo Gómez Perpinyà. In this case, it is possible to see how there is an emphasis on the political candidate as the representative of Más Madrid. That is, that the party's proposal for the May 4 elections is largely reflected on the figure of Mónica García. Nonetheless, it is important to note that the candidate herself does include references to other figures of the party, as previously stated. This is something that does not happen with the party's usage of TikTok, as will be explained in the next section. Still, it matches Monasterio's use of the platform.



monicagarciag\_ 🌐 El colegio Juan Zaragüeta está rodeado por la M40, una cementera y un parking privado de Iberdrola.

Hoy, junto a @rita\_maestre\_ y @maria\_pastor\_v, he acompañado a las madres y padres del cole y apoyado sus reivindicaciones para conseguir un entorno seguro, más sano y más verde.

115 sem

*Figure 26: Mónica García and Rita Maestre.*

*Source: García M. (2021c, March 18)*



monicagarciag\_ 🌐 Madrid tiene un cielo y un sol especial. Hoy lo he disfrutado junto a @p\_gomezperpinya y más compañeras en la manifestación #20mleyvivienda, exigiendo una regulación de los precios del alquiler que nos permita vivir 🏠.

La vivienda es un derecho, por mucho que algunos piensen y actúen como si fuera un bien de mercado. la obligación y responsabilidad del gobierno es garantizarlo.

115 sem

*Figure 25: Mónica García and Pablo Gómez Perpinyà.*

*Source: García, M. (2021d, March 20)*

Regarding **negative personalization**, the study detected high levels of negative characterisation of Isabel Díaz Ayuso, as well as the Popular Party. These were often enmeshed with professional personalization. As shown in Figure 27 and 28, as well as in Annex III, Mónica García characterises her attendance to meetings, protests, or events in the community within larger issues that are framed as being a problem of the current administration. In such a way, they characterise Isabel Díaz Ayuso in a negative light, trying to dissuade voters from voting the candidate. There is a personalization of Más Madrid's and García's opposition, in the figure of Isabel Díaz Ayuso, as a representative for the Popular Party.

This differs, unsurprisingly, to the usage by Monasterio and Díaz Ayuso, which target Pablo Iglesias. Más Madrid's is less prone to do so, since its main opposition would be those political parties on the right-wing political spectrum.



monicagarciag\_ 🌐 Hemos acompañado a los vecinos y vecinas del barrio de las Letras en su denuncia de las fiestas ilegales de turistas que vienen e incumplen las medidas sanitarias.

No es justo que no podamos abrazar a nuestros abuelos mientras Ayuso promueve el turismo de borrachera. Madrid no es el after de Europa.

114 sem

Figure 27: Mónica García at a meeting with a local community.

Source: García, M. (2021f, March 23)



monicagarciag\_ 🌐 Esta ha sido la última irresponsabilidad del PP en Madrid. Me enfrenté al virus y me enfrentaré a Ayuso. Estoy preparada para echarla de la Puerta del Sol.

#MadridAyuso

116 sem

Figure 28: Mónica García's launch of her campaign: negative personalization.

Source: García, M. (2021a, March 14)

### 5.3 TikTok

In terms of **private personalization**, the study found that there was a presence of private personalization which delved into the private life of the candidate. As shown in Figure 29, the party opted to publish posts in which García would talk about her hopes as a child, and how she ended up working as an anaesthetist and politician. Moreover, another particularly viral post of the candidate is shown in Figure 30, where she danced ('twerked') in an interview. The party chooses to coin her "the queen of twerking." These

are clear instances of the party account bringing forth a more humane and approachable figure of Mónica García, even an entertaining one, which, as stated before, is strategic in that it hopes to connect with the electorate and secure their support. Further examples include a spot of the candidate in a running track, making reference to her childhood as an athlete, that overlaps with her political proposals. This further instance of private personalization can be found in Annex III.



**mas\_madrid**   
 Más Madrid · 2021-4-7

[Seguir](#)

Parte 1 | A la política le hacen falta más medicas, más Mónicas. Más gente que nos cuide de verdad. #DíaMundialDeLaSalud #SanidadPública #Elecciones

🔊 sonido original - Más Madrid

*Figure 29: Talks with Mónica García.  
 Source: Más Madrid (2021b, April 7)*



**mas\_madrid**   
 Más Madrid · 2021-4-14

[Seguir](#)

Reina del perreo: Mónica García 🔥 #BuenismoBien #4M #Elecciones #Coreo #bailando

🔊 sonido original - Más Madrid

*Figure 30: Mónica García twerking.  
 Source: Más Madrid 82021c, April 14)*

In terms of **professional personalization**, the study found that there was a significant level of detected in the party’s TikTok posts. Practically all posts in the period analysed follow Mónica García as the representative of Más Madrid. In fact, as can be

gathered in subsequent illustrations, such as Figure 31, the vote is framed as a vote to Mónica García, levelled with the party. The source from which the public understands the party is Mónica García, and thus there is a presence of professional personalization. Whilst there is a mention to other actors in the political party such as Iñigo Errejón, Rita Maestre or Pablo Gómez Perpinyà (Más Madrid, 2021d) these are limited to one post, and are thus minimal in comparison to the references to Mónica García. This would then differ to the strategy undertaken by the TikTok account of the Popular Party, and even that of Mónica García herself in her Instagram account, as both underscore other important names in their respective parties.



Figure 31: Vote to Más Madrid, and Mónica García.  
Source: Más Madrid (2021g, April 21)

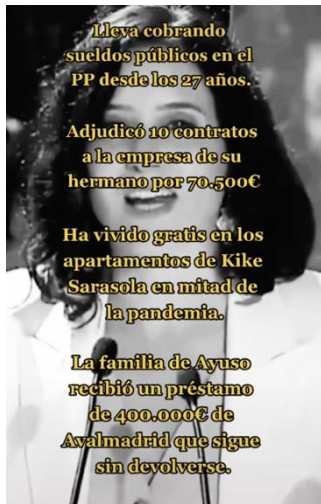
Further instances of professional personalization include clips of the candidate in televised debates, as shown in Figure 32. There is a similar framing of professional personalization with the other candidates, such as Monasterio, where even these day-to-day political activities are viewed in a negative personalization frame. The candidate of the party is highlighted in their professional capacity, and simultaneously, the rival political candidate is discredited. In Figure 32, the subject of this negative characterization is Isabel Díaz Ayuso.





*Figure 32: Mónica García in a televised debate.  
Source: Más Madrid (2021i, April 22)*

Following up on this is the issue of **negative personalization**. Most particularly, the analysis of the account of Más Madrid detected high levels of negative personalization, which matches García's own Instagram account. Most publications were directed towards Ayuso, see Figure 33, but some also included Rocío Monasterio, as shown in Figure 34. Even Bea Fanjul, a congresswoman for the Popular Party, was a target of negative personalization, shown in Annex III. The negative personalization strategy then, does not extend to other similar parties in the left-wing spectrum, but is extended to the political opposition of Más Madrid. This also means that the focus of the negative personalization strategy mostly stays on the local, Madrid level, and does not extend to national opposition counterparts. This is a strategy that differs significantly from the Popular Party and VOX, since they do make reference to national politicians such as Pedro Sánchez or Teresa Montero. This is also to be expected, given that their political opposition currently hold the Presidency. Más Madrid's opposition is not the current government, so it is less likely that they would negatively personalize it at the same level at which they characterize Díaz Ayuso.



Más Madrid · 2021-4-20

Seguir

La caradura de Ayuso no tiene límites. #Elecciones4M #Ayuso #Madrid #VotaMásMadrid

🎵 Hope (feat. Faith Evans) - Twista

Figure 33: Negative Personalization of Isabel Díaz Ayuso (I).

Source: Más Madrid (2021f, April 20)



Más Madrid · 2021-4-22

Seguir

La desfachatez de la ultraderecha no tiene límites. #MónicaGarcía #VotaMásMadrid #Elecciones4M #Ultraderecha #Ayuso

🎵 Somebody To Love - Bastrologe

Figure 34: Negative personalization of Rocío Monasterio.

Source: Más Madrid (2021h, April 22)

## 6. Conclusion

The analysis of the three personalization indicators across political parties' social media accounts reveals similarities and differences in the reflections drawn from the personalization of politics theory. We will proceed to comparatively analyse the main findings of each type of personalization within each party, and across parties.

In terms of **private personalization**, the study found that all personal Instagram accounts had a significant presence of content showing a non-political, private side of the political candidates. This, as previously stated, does help in showing a more humane individual, more approachable, and more likeable. The actual content of those private posts varied. Indeed, in the cases of Mónica García and Rocío Monasterio, there was a particular emphasis on posts that featured their family, whilst for Ayuso this was not the case. In the latter's case, there were more posts of her with her dog. In such a way, all three candidates find it relevant and even desirable to use their Instagram accounts as platforms where they can offer voters peeks into their daily lives, outside political duties. This is a trend that is present across all three parties.

In terms of TikTok usage, the presence of private personalization was significantly different. With regards to VOX, the study confirmed that there was no presence of private personalization in the party account. Nonetheless, this was also impacted by the small unit of posts available for analysis, and thus could be complemented with further posts in non-campaign periods. With regards to the Popular Party, the study confirmed that there were no significant instances of private personalization of Díaz Ayuso either. However, this trend was not replicated in the case of Más Madrid. Indeed, the account featured several posts of the candidate in a more informal and non-political setting. Such examples include Mónica García dancing, but also clips of interviews where she delves into her childhood and her dreams of becoming an anaesthetist. In such a way, Más Madrid diverges from the overall trend of private personalization in party accounts.

In terms of **professional personalization**, the study found that all personal Instagram accounts had a significant presence of content showing the candidate in their political, day-to-day duties. This is particularly surprising, given that one of the studies' hypotheses was that the Instagram account would be mostly shaped by private

personalization. Nonetheless, post-analysis, the investigation found that the candidates' themselves used too their own accounts to bolster their political image. In all three accounts, the candidates offered new content on political meetings and events; content that, paradoxically, was not always published in official party accounts. It is important to note too that candidates also took the opportunity to upload posts of official events, mentioning other politicians of the political party. This was especially prevalent in the cases of Mónica García and Rocío Monasterio.

In terms of TikTok usage, the study confirmed a relevant presence of professional personalization in official party accounts, a fact that was to be expected given the study's hypothesis. Nonetheless, there are still nuances across the three different accounts. With regards to Díaz Ayuso, the Popular Party's account did emphasise her candidature as a relevant point of reference within the party. Nonetheless, other prominent figures did appear, such as Ana Camins or Almudena Negro. This, whilst not outshining Díaz Ayuso's presence in the account, does contextualise it beyond her candidature in Madrid. Hence, the professional personalization of Díaz Ayuso was significant in the Popular Party's TikTok. This was even more true in the case of Más Madrid, for their account focused exclusively on Mónica García, save one post where other actors like Iñigo Errejón were featured. In this sense, García clearly becomes the protagonist of the party in their social media account, indicating a high degree of professional personalization. Lastly, Monasterio's case is more particular because from the four posts available in the account during the campaign period, she only appears in one. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain a true trend of professional personalization. Whilst she does feature in the account in her professional capacity, it is not something that is truly perceivable, given that there are only four posts available.

Lastly, regarding **negative personalization**, the study found a high presence of it across all three case studies, with differences regarding platforms selected. The phenomenon has been found to be strategic, in that not all candidates pursued the same negative personalization strategy towards the same individual. Regarding Instagram, the candidates that truly made use of the negative personalization strategy were found to be Mónica García and Rocío Monasterio. Both candidates made allusions to their political rivals, personalising the opposition's party in a single individual. In the case of García, this was found to be Isabel Díaz Ayuso. In the case of Rocío Monasterio, it went beyond Mónica García, including other national and local names like Pablo Iglesias or Pedro

Sánchez. It is curious to note that negative personalization did not really have an impact on Ayuso's personal account. A fact that is surprising, given that her whole campaign was constructed upon the negative personalization of Pablo Iglesias and other left-wing politicians.

Nonetheless, the negative personalization strategy in TikTok is clearly present across all three political accounts. There is no absence in one of the three, but there are differences in the political rivals chosen to negatively personalize. Indeed, the rivals chosen by VOX and the Popular Party are the most alike. Both parties choose to negatively personalize Pablo Iglesias, a choice that follows closely the framing of the 2021 elections. Other than that, both parties negatively personalize the opposition in other national figures like Pedro Sánchez. Conversely, Más Madrid chooses to focus much of its content around the negative personalization of Isabel Díaz Ayuso. Many of the posts focus on the negative characterisation of the candidate. Nonetheless, they do criticise Rocío Monasterio, and even other politicians like Bea Fanjul, as shown in Annex, III. Still, the brunt of it is concentrated on Díaz Ayuso.

Taking these insights into account, it is possible to answer our hypotheses formulated at the beginning of the study. Indeed, the first hypothesis was confirmed, in that political parties and politicians alike do focus the political debate around the candidate chosen for the presidency in the 2021 elections. This entails that the political debate and landscape is largely understood and interpreted from the individual politician that represents it. Even in the cases with lower levels of professional personalization – such as the Popular Party, in that it did make reference to other politicians– most of the party's attention was still focused on the main candidate that was opting for the presidency. Thus, the individual still gained ground over the party in the electoral campaign. Hence, confirming one of the assertions made by the theory of personalization.

The second hypotheses, being the differing degrees of personalization identified in the TikTok and Instagram accounts, was also confirmed. Still, this comes with certain nuances. Indeed, the type of personalization that was present in the personal Instagram accounts was different to that of the party accounts in TikTok. For example, in the case of Díaz Ayuso, there was a higher degree of private personalization in her Instagram account than in the party account. In such a sense, the hypothesis formulated by the study –being that of a higher private personalization in Instagram and a higher professional

personalization in TikTok— was confirmed. Nonetheless, there is a nuance to be included, which partly goes against the hypothesis. Indeed, professional personalization was also found in the personal accounts of the candidates, whereby a high number of posts followed each candidate in their day-to-day activities as politicians. Many times, as argued previously, this would entail new content published that was not replicated in official party accounts. Conversely, party accounts such as those of Más Madrid did have a significant degree of private personalization content, following García in an interview where she detailed onto her private aspirations and memories as a child. In such a sense, it is not possible to establish the dichotomy of private or professional in the accounts, rather a private *and/or* professional personalization that might be present in both platforms.

Furthermore, the study confirmed how there were differences across the three parties selected (Popular Party, Vox, Más Madrid), in the content they chose to post. Content which was influenced by, amongst other variables, their position in the Government at Madrid: be it as a governing party, a party favourable to the government, or an opposition party, respectively. This was particularly reflected with the phenomenon of negative personalization. Indeed, political formations favourable to the government of the Popular Party, such as VOX, did not engage in a negative personalization of Díaz Ayuso. Conversely, the Popular Party did not engage in negative personalization of Rocío Monasterio. Nonetheless, they did engage in the negative personalization of other left-wing parties which were their opposition. And the opposition, in this case represented by Más Madrid, negatively personalized their own rivals, which in this case were Díaz Ayuso and Rocío Monasterio.

All in all, it is possible to assert that there is indeed a presence of personalization in social media strategies undertaken by these three local parties in the 2021 elections. Nonetheless, the type of personalization that is perceived is what differs across parties and across platforms (being private, professional, and negative). In such a way, the study has met its goal of verifying the presence of personalization, and humbly contributing to the existing debate in Spanish academia that is still contending the presence of this phenomenon in online media. Further investigations on the matter are needed in order to keep contributing to a rich body of research and analysis that can then map a wider trend of personalization of politics in online political contexts. This includes data on online

accounts of political parties and candidates that goes beyond the campaign context, and includes non-electoral periods.

Moreover, whilst this study has been focused on verifying the presence of personalization, this is but the first step in a wider body of research that has many more potential avenues. Indeed, the first step is analysing the presence of said phenomenon. Nonetheless, further avenues of research include research on the impact of said phenomenon in our political communication. Studies could include the impact of personalization on the public, analysing other units of social media posts such as likes, comments, and engagement in the platform. These are important studies too that must be undertaken in conjunction with those analysing the actual presence of personalization in our online societies. It is necessary to not only analyse whether the phenomenon is present in our political systems, but also to analyse the impacts of said presence on citizens.

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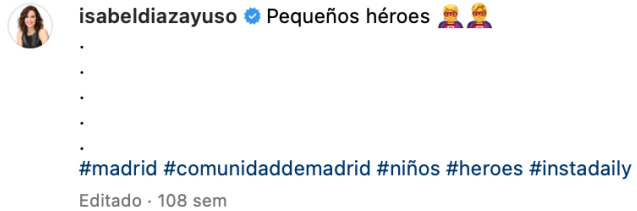
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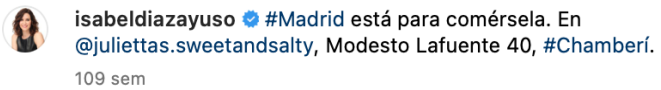
## 8. Annexes

### Annex I: Isabel Díaz Ayuso

The following posts refer to the private personalization in Ayuso's **Instagram** account



*Figure 1: Isabel Díaz Ayuso with children*  
Source: Ayuso, I.D. (2021j, May 1)





*Figure 2: Isabel Díaz Ayuso visits a local bakery*  
Source: Ayuso, I.D. (2021i, April 27)



*Figure 3: Presents to Isabel Díaz Ayuso from her supporters.*  
Source: Ayuso, I.D. (2021h, April 24)

The following posts refer to the professional personalization present in Isabel Díaz Ayuso's Instagram account.



 **isabeldiazayuso**  ¡Vamos #Pozuelo! ¡Vamos #Madrid!  
¡Vamos #España!

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#comunidaddemadrid #4M #eleccionesmadrid  
#pozueldearcon #libertad #picsoftheday #instadaily  
@pablocasadoblanco @partidopopular

109 sem

Figure 5: Ayuso's visits to neighbourhoods in Madrid.  
Source: Ayuso, I.D. (2021g, April 24)



 **isabeldiazayuso**  Hoy junto a @enriquerez visitando #LaPaz y el #12deOctubre, para analizar la próxima remodelación de dos de los mejores #hospitales públicos de #España.

Invertiremos en ellos más de 700 millones de euros para seguir mejorando la #sanidad pública madrileña.

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#madrid #comunidaddemadrid #sanidadpublica #instaday  
#instadaily #picoftheday

112 sem

Figure 4: Ayuso visits the Hospital 'La Paz'.  
Source: Ayuso, I.D. (2021c, April 6)

The following posts refer to the professional personalization in PP Madrid's TikTok account, referencing other influential figures in the party.



 **ppmadrid**  
PP Madrid · 2021-4-5 Seguir

#anacamins #ayusopresidenta #ayuso #comunidadmadrid  
#yoconayuso #podemos #psoe #vox #partidopopular #madrid  
#pedrosanchez #feel #likee #ayusers

🎵 sonido original - PP Madrid

Figure 6: Ana Camins.  
Source: Partido Popular Madrid (2021e, April 5)



ppmadrid

PP Madrid · 2021-4-5

Seguir

#ayusopresidenta #ayuso #almudenanegro #comunidadmadrid  
 #yoconayuso #podemos #psoe #vox #partidopopular #viral #likee  
 #music #voto #madrid

🎵 sonido original - PP Madrid

Figure 7: Almodena Negro.

Source: Partido Popular Madrid (2021f, April 5)

The following posts refer to the negative personalization in PP Madrid's TikTok account, referring to Ángel Gabilondo, María Jesús Montero and Pedro Sánchez.



ppmadrid

PP Madrid · 2021-4-14

Seguir

#ayusopresidenta #ayuso #comunidadmadrid #podemos #psoe  
 #vox #partidopopular #viral #likee #music #madrid #voto  
 #pedrosanchez #yoconayuso #feel

🎵 sonido original - PP Madrid

Figure 8: Negative personalization of PSOE: Pedro Sánchez, María Jesús Montero, Ángel Gabilondo.

Source: Partido Popular Madrid (2021h, April 14)



ppmadrid  
PP Madrid · 2021-4-7

Seguir

#ayusopresidenta #ayuso #comunidadmadrid #podemos #psoe  
#vox #partidopopular #viral #likee #music #madrid #voto  
#pedrosanchez #ayusers

🎵 sonido original - PP Madrid

Figure 9: Negative personalization of Pedro Sánchez,  
Source: Partido popular Madrid (2021g, April 7)

## Annex II: Rocío Monasterio

The following posts refer to the private personalization in Monasterio's **Instagram** account.



rociomonasteriovox 🌟 Hoy me ha venido a visitar a la nueva sede de VOX mi querida Quinta...(cuatro niños y la Quinta) ¡super fan! ¡nos echamos mucho de menos! ¡Amorosa! 🥰

#ProtegeMadrid  
#VotaSeguro

109 sem

Figure 10: Rocío Monasterio and her dog.  
Source: Monasterio, R. (2021g, April 24)



rociomonasteriovox  Dice @ivanedlm que está reflexionando sobre su voto 😂😂😂



108 sem

*Figure 11: Rocío Monasterio and her husband (II).*

*Source: Monasterio, R. (2021k, May 3)*

The following posts refer to the professional personalization in Monasterio's Instagram account.




rociomonasteriovox  ¡Chicos, gracias a todos los que nos habéis acompañado pegando carteles! ¡Me ha encantado!  
#ProtegeMadrid  
#VotaSeguro 

110 sem

*Figure 12: Campaign organization (behind the scenes).*

*Source: Monasterio, R. (2021f, April 19)*



rociomonasteriovox  ¡Gracias a todos los que hoy nos habéis acompañado en Colón! Emocionante vuestro cariño y vuestro compromiso con el futuro de España. 🥰🥰🇪🇸🇪🇸

108 sem

*Figure 13: Meeting at Colón.*

*Source: Monasterio, R. (2021i, May 3)*

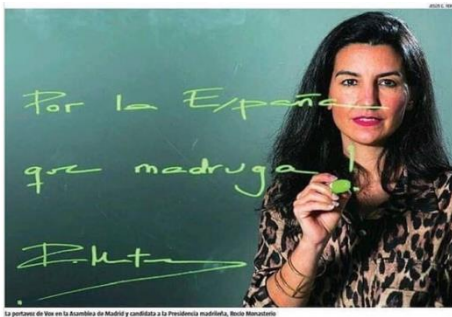
The following posts refer to negative personalization in Monasterio's Instagram account.



 rociomonasteriovox 🇵🇪 Vaya mañanita de progres 😏  
111 sem

Figure 14: Vallecas meeting - negative personalization (II).

Source: Monasterio, R. (2021c, April 15)




 rociomonasteriovox 🇵🇪 ¡Vamos a elecciones!  
A sacar a comunistas y socialistas de los gobierno,  
a defender a la España que madruga!  
Madrugar ... eso a los del chalet de Galapagar ni les suena! 😂😂  
A tope! 💪  
115 sem

Figure 15: Negative personalization of left-wing parties.

Source: Monasterio, R. (2021a, March 15)

### Annex III: Mónica García

The following posts refer to the private personalization in García's Instagram account.




 monicagarciag\_ 🇵🇪 Un día más en la sierra de Madrid, recargando pilas para lo que viene.  
109 sem

Figure 16: Mónica García on a hike.

Source: García, M. 820211, May 3)





monicagarcia\_ 🌟 Ha sido una semana intensa, pero cuando tienes motivación vas a por todas 💪

La mía está clara: quiero hacer un Madrid mejor por el futuro de mis hijos y mi hija.

115 sem

Figure 17: Mónica García (behind the scenes of the campaign).

Source: García M. (2021e, March 21)



monicagarcia\_ 🌟 Relaxing cup of café con leche in 100 Montaditos 🍷

114 sem

Figure 18: Mónica García having a coffee.

Source: García, M. (2021i, March 29)

The following posts refer to the professional personalization in García's Instagram account.



monicagarcia\_ 🌟 En el pasado año más de 7.000 personas murieron en residencias de mayores de la Comunidad de Madrid. La política de Ayuso respecto a los y las mayores quedó clara.

Pero la mala gestión de las residencias viene de mucho antes. Hoy, junto a @rita\_maestre\_, @edelgadorgaz y @pacotk, hemos visitado la residencia de Ensanche de Vallecas ejemplo del modelo de gestión privada que pone por delante los intereses económicos a la salud y el bienestar de las personas.

114 sem

Figure 19: Mónica García at a residence for the elderly.

Source: García, M. (2021g, March 25)



monicagarcia\_ 🌟 Hoy hemos tenido el primer encuentro del camino que vamos a recorrer juntas hacia el 4 de mayo. Y que mejor que empezar a caminarlo con @rita\_maestre\_ y Félix López-Rey 🍀

#MásBarriosyPueblos 🦵

*Figure 20: Mónica García at a political meeting.*

*Source: García, M: (2021h, March 27)*

The following posts refer to the negative personalization in García's Instagram account.



monicagarcia\_ 🌟 Esta mañana he visitado junto a @rita\_maestre\_ y @pacotk la UVA y el Ensanche de Vallecas donde las vecinas y vecinos llevan más de una década sin un acceso decente al Hospital Infanta Leonor. Doce años sin el paso inferior prometido.

Unas vías de tren obligan a coger un autobús para poder llegar al hospital. Un autobús que hasta la llegada de Carmena al Ayuntamiento era de pago. Desde el PP nunca se han preocupado por el barrio que lleva esperando más de cinco años su segundo centro de salud.

Acceder a la sanidad también depende de qué ciudades construimos 🍀

115 sem

*Figure 21: Mónica García's negative personalization of Isabel Díaz Ayuso.*

*Source: García, M. (2021b, March 17)*

The following posts refer to the professional personalization in Más Madrid's **TikTok** account, presenting the day-to-day political activities of the candidate.



Figure 22: Mónica García at a political meeting.

Source: Más Madrid (2021e, April 18)



Figure 23: Mónica García at the radio station, SER.

Source: Más Madrid (2021j, April 23)

The following post refers to the private personalization in Más Madrid's TikTok account, presenting a more personal side of the candidate, and referencing her past as an athlete. It also connects with the proposals of the party candidate herself and thus connects it to the elections the 4th of May.



**mas\_madrid** ✓  
Más Madrid · 2021-4-27

Seguir

A ganar en la recta final. #Elecciones4M #VotaMásMadrid #4DeMayo #Ayuso #MónicaGarcía

🎵 sonido original - Más Madrid

Figure 24: Mónica García running track spot 2021 elections.  
Source: Más Madrid (2021k, April 27)

The following posts refer to the negative personalization encountered in Más Madrid's TikTok account, which is largely directed towards Isabel Díaz Ayuso.



**mas\_madrid** ✓  
Más Madrid · 2021-5-2

Seguir

Elige lo bueno: Vota Mónica. #VotaMásMadrid #4DeMayo #Ayuso #Elecciones4M #MónicaGarcía

🎵 Still Don't Know My Name - Labrinth

Figure 25: Negative Personalization of Díaz Ayuso (II) - Bea Fanjul.  
Source: Más Madrid (2021l, May 5)



**mas\_madrid** ✓  
Más Madrid · 2021-3-22

Seguir

Bye, Ayuso. Hello, Mónica. #Madrid #fyp #challenges #tiktok #4M

🎵 sonido original - Más Madrid

*Figure 26: Negative personalization of Isabel Díaz Ayuso (III).  
Source: Más Madrid (2021<sup>a</sup>, March 22)*